



Ohio Revised Code

Section 5122.32 Confidentiality of quality assurance records.

Effective: September 29, 2017

Legislation: House Bill 49 - 132nd General Assembly

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Quality assurance committee" means a committee that is appointed in the central office of the department of mental health and addiction services by the director of mental health and addiction services, a committee of a hospital or community setting program, or a duly authorized subcommittee of a committee of that nature and that is designated to carry out quality assurance program activities.

(2) "Quality assurance program" means a comprehensive program within the department of mental health and addiction services to systematically review and improve the quality of medical and mental health services within the department and its hospitals and community setting programs, the safety and security of persons receiving or administering medical and mental health services within the department and its hospitals and community setting programs, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the utilization of staff and resources in the delivery of medical and mental health services within the department and its hospitals and community setting programs. "Quality assurance program" includes the central office quality assurance committees, morbidity and mortality review committees, quality assurance programs of community setting programs, quality assurance committees of hospitals operated by the department of mental health and addiction services, and the office of licensure and certification of the department.

(3) "Quality assurance program activities" include collecting or compiling information and reports required by a quality assurance committee, receiving, reviewing, or implementing the recommendations made by a quality assurance committee, and credentialing, privileging, infection control, tissue review, peer review, utilization review including access to patient care records, patient care assessment records, and medical and mental health records, medical and mental health resource management, mortality and morbidity review, and identification and prevention of medical or mental health incidents and risks, whether performed by a quality assurance committee or by persons who are directed by a quality assurance committee.



(4) "Quality assurance records" means the proceedings, discussion, records, findings, recommendations, evaluations, opinions, minutes, reports, and other documents or actions that emanate from quality assurance committees, quality assurance programs, or quality assurance program activities. "Quality assurance records" does not include aggregate statistical information that does not disclose the identity of persons receiving or providing medical or mental health services in department of mental health and addiction services hospitals or community setting programs.

(B)(1) Except as provided in division (E) of this section, quality assurance records are confidential and are not public records under section 149.43 of the Revised Code, and shall be used only in the course of the proper functions of a quality assurance program.

(2) Except as provided in division (E) of this section, no person who possesses or has access to quality assurance records and who knows that the records are quality assurance records shall willfully disclose the contents of the records to any person or entity.

(C)(1) Except as provided in division (E) of this section, no quality assurance record shall be subject to discovery, and is not admissible in evidence, in any judicial or administrative proceeding.

(2) Except as provided in division (E) of this section, no member of a quality assurance committee or a person who is performing a function that is part of a quality assurance program shall be permitted or required to testify in a judicial or administrative proceeding with respect to quality assurance records or with respect to any finding, recommendation, evaluation, opinion, or other action taken by the committee, member, or person.

(3) Information, documents, or records otherwise available from original sources are not to be construed as being unavailable for discovery or admission in evidence in a judicial or administrative proceeding merely because they were presented to a quality assurance committee. No person testifying before a quality assurance committee or person who is a member of a quality assurance committee shall be prevented from testifying as to matters within the person's knowledge, but the witness cannot be asked about the witness' testimony before the quality assurance committee or about an opinion formed by the person as a result of the quality assurance committee proceedings.



(D)(1) A person who, without malice and in the reasonable belief that the information is warranted by the facts known to the person, provides information to a person engaged in quality assurance program activities is not liable for damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property to any person as a result of providing the information.

(2) A member of a quality assurance committee, a person engaged in quality assurance program activities, and an employee of the department of mental health and addiction services shall not be liable in damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property to any person for any acts, omissions, decisions, or other conduct within the scope of the functions of the quality assurance program.

(3) Nothing in this section shall relieve any institution or individual from liability arising from the treatment of a patient.

(E) Quality assurance records may be disclosed, and testimony may be provided concerning quality assurance records, only to the following persons or entities:

(1) Persons who are employed or retained by the department of mental health and addiction services and who have authority to evaluate or implement the recommendations of a state-operated hospital, community setting program, or central office quality assurance committee;

(2) Public or private agencies or organizations if needed to perform a licensing or accreditation function related to department of mental health and addiction services hospitals or community setting programs, or to perform monitoring of a hospital or program of that nature as required by law.

(F) A disclosure of quality assurance records pursuant to division (E) of this section does not otherwise waive the confidential and privileged status of the disclosed quality assurance records.

(G) Nothing in this section shall limit the access of the Ohio protection and advocacy system to records or personnel as required under section 5123.601 of the Revised Code. Nothing in this section shall limit the admissibility of documentary or testimonial evidence in an action brought by the Ohio protection and advocacy system in its own name or on behalf of a client.